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LB 870, 880

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Schrock, your light is on next.  
Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Mr. President, members of the body, I rise as a reluctant supporter for this. I told Senator Schrock I would do so. I would beat it off...beat this one off on LB 880, the mainline appropriations bill, because I felt that it was more appropriate on this particular bill, because of the content. It is another \$150,000, and I recognize that, but I do recognize the importance of water quality in this state...not even so much because of the necessity for water quality, but I think it's important to have benchmarks and a constant understanding. The point is, even if we would have good quality water and it may not be recognized or known, this would provide actually both positives and negatives, if you will. If we have a problem, we'll know it; if we don't have a problem, we will know it. And so I do support that. I think this is a proper place for it to be, because it is connected with this bill, what we're concerned about water. And I support the accompanying...I assume that will be in the A bill, but this does have the cost...this does provide the policy.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, just to say that I certainly support the amendment. We had a somewhat thorough discussion on this last time, and I think probably there's an improved understanding of the whole area since then a little bit. So hopefully, the body is supportive to the amendment of this particular bill. I would just remind you that this bill...that this amendment will hopefully fill in one of the last large gaps in what I consider our monitoring program, both as it applies to ground water and to surface water. It's the NRDs primarily that are monitoring the ground water, and I think by and large doing an ever improving job of that. But DEQ simply hasn't had the resources to properly monitor surface water, and that's going to become...that will become...is becoming, increasingly important vis a vis our position with other states, as that water flows out of Nebraska and into the Gulf. So this money would specifically provide...and I think they intend to use it to deal specifically with nutrients and in particular nitrates and